AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of planning demand for a configurable product having at least one product dependent characteristic and one product independent characteristic in a managed supply chain, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

providing a data storage system to store data with respect to a plurality of product independent characteristics and product dependent characteristics;

receiving, by a processor, a selection of at least one product to be represented;

receiving, by the processor, a selection of a particular characteristic to be represented;

receiving, by the processor, a planning parameter with respect to the selection of a particular characteristic or product;

loading, by the processor, data from the data storage system into a buffer;

performing, by the processor, a calculation on the data with respect to the product dependent characteristics and the product independent characteristics;

modelling, by the processor, a hierarchy of the represented data, wherein the hierarchy is defined in accordance with the planning parameter; and

using the hierarchy to administer the buffered data.

2. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the administration of the buffered data includes the step of:

performing a propagating recalculation of a change in the data through the data storage system, wherein the calculation differs from that defined by the planning parameter.

3. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

storing the recalculated data in the data storage system.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 3, further comprising:

loading the recalculated data into the data storage system.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the calculation is a disaggregation calculation.

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the recalculation is a disaggregation or an aggregation calculation.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the data storage system is an object oriented data base.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the modelling step includes modelling the hierarchy with respect to the product dependent characteristics and the product independent characteristics.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the calculating step is carried out by the data storage system.

10. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein ~~the calculating and recalculating steps calculate the~~ performing the calculation on the data comprises calculating an incidence of each product dependent characteristic and each product independent characteristic in accordance with the selected product.

11. (Previously Presented) A demand planner apparatus for planning demand for a configurable product in a managed supply chain, wherein said demand planner is operatively associated with a data storage system to store data with respect to a plurality of product independent characteristics and product dependent characteristics, and wherein said demand planner is operatively associated with a user interface for receiving input of the selection of at least one product to be represented, input of the selection of a particular characteristic to be represented, and input of a planning parameter with respect to the selection of a particular characteristic or product, said demand planner apparatus comprising:

a storage medium storing processor readable code to plan demand for a configurable product in a managed supply chain, said code comprising:

data loading code to load data from the data storage system into a buffer,

calculation performing code to perform a calculation on the data with respect to the product dependent characteristics and the product independent characteristics, and

hierarchy modelling code to model a hierarchy of the data, wherein the hierarchy is defined in accordance with the planning parameter, wherein the hierarchy is used to administer the buffered data.

12. (Currently Amended) The demand planner apparatus according to claim [[9]] 11, wherein administering the buffered data includes performing a propagating recalculation of a change in the data through the data storage system, where the calculation differs from that defined by the planning parameter.

13 - 14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium storing program instructions executable by a processor to perform a method of planning demand for a configurable product having at least one product dependent characteristic and one product independent characteristic in a managed supply chain, the method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

providing a data storage system to store data with respect to a plurality of product independent characteristics and product dependent characteristics;

receiving a selection of at least one product to be represented;

receiving a selection of a particular characteristic to be represented;

receiving a planning parameter with respect to the selection of a particular characteristic or product;

loading data from the data storage system into a buffer;

performing a calculation on the data with respect to the product dependent characteristics and the product independent characteristics;

modeling a hierarchy of the represented data, wherein the hierarchy is defined in accordance with the planning parameter; and

using the hierarchy to administer the buffered data.